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Letter dated 15 August 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation dated 14 August 2000 in connection with the missile attacks made by the air forces of the United States of America and United Kingdom in the south of Iraq. I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(*Signed*) G. **Gatilov**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 15 August 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

In the last few days the air forces of the United States of America and the United Kingdom have carried out missile attacks on the town of Samawa in the south of Iraq. As a result there have been casualties among peaceful civilians. In addition to homes, foodstores and humanitarian relief distribution centres have also been destroyed.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation considers that these actions are illegal under international law and that they must be stopped immediately.

The people who suffer from the destruction of food supply facilities are, first of all, ordinary Iraqis who are already experiencing enormous privations as a consequence of the sanctions regime. The efforts of the international community which are directed towards alleviating the catastrophic humanitarian situation in the country through the implementation of the corresponding United Nations programme are being undermined.

Strikes against Iraqi territory merely serve to heighten tension in the region. This is occurring at a time when the international community is becoming increasingly convinced that it is essential to step up the efforts to resolve the problem of Iraq by political and diplomatic means.